



## Most Decided by Meter Size

# Survey Results Reflect Connection Charges

Most water providers with large volume users levy their connection fee by meter size according to Draper Aden Associates' latest fax survey. Fifty water providers from across the state were surveyed to discover how charges for water connections were determined for commercial/business/industrial users. The criterion for selection was based on the size of the providers considering the probability of them having more large volume users.

Of the 25 respondents, 60% said they determined the charge by meter size. Twenty-eight percent indicated both meter size and connection/availability fees were considered in the decision. Only 7% stated the charge was based on connection/availability fee alone.

As shown in the graph to the right, cities generally show the most "bang for the buck" with lower average fees in all but one meter size category. Average county fees fall below those charged by authorities in the smaller meter categories with that trend reversing with larger meters.

Meter Size (in inches)	Average Connection Fees			
	Towns	Cities	Counties	Authorities
5/8	*\$500	\$1,293	\$2,458	\$3,389
3/4		\$1,284	\$3,495	\$7,208
1	*\$800	\$1,953	\$6,838	\$8,155
1.5	*\$1,200	\$4,534	\$11,820	\$17,404
2	*\$1,500	\$6,104	\$19,359	\$22,871
3		\$20,156	\$54,516	\$49,748
4		\$27,767	\$91,750	\$53,100
6		\$61,418	\$191,006	\$137,200
8		\$140,525	\$131,430	*\$150,000
10		\$216,814	*\$355,580	*\$250,000
12			*\$479,260	*\$300,000

\*Indicates there was only one response.

One interesting fact that surfaced from the survey results was the indication there continues to be confusion about connection and availability fees. In several responses, the terms were used interchangeably and in others connection fees and availability fees were two distinct charges. In the strictest sense, a connection fee is the charge a customer pays to

Meter Size	Overall Average Fee
5/8"	\$2,032
3/4"	\$2,948
1"	\$4,208
1.5"	\$9,949
2"	\$13,831
3"	\$40,218
4"	\$53,286
6"	\$123,559
8"	\$139,072
10"	\$251,204
12"	\$389,630

## Virginia Water Permit Fees to be Raised July 1

The General Assembly passed legislation this month which triples Virginia's waste and water permit fee maximum amounts as of July 1, 2002. House bill 1257 (Patron James H. Dillard) amended a part of the Code of Virginia relating to environmental permit fees in order to recover the Department of Environmental Quality's program implementation costs not covered by federal grants or general fund appropriations. Currently the fees imposed are used to process permits.

The higher fees could have a severe impact on those permittees in need of multiple permits. One way to offset the potential the budgetary impact would be to file early. A complete application filed before July 1 could potentially save thousands of dollars.

The bill (identical to SB 592) directs the Virginia Waste Management Board to "develop new permit fee schedules sufficient to cover no more than 20 percent of the direct costs of the hazardous and solid waste programs, using as the base the



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## Survey.....continued from front.

have water or sewer service installed. An availability fee is a one-time charge used to offset future capital expenditures for recently completed or planned infrastructure expansion or remediation.

Other interesting notes from those responding to our survey:

- Four localities stated that connection charges were based on actual costs plus a standard percentage ranging from 10% to 30%.
- One locality had different fees depending on whether the water lines were city or developer funded/constructed.
- One locality requires developers to provide and install meters and connections to local specifications if the required size is 3 inches or greater.

### Quick Facts

The survey received a 50% response rate with 25 participating out of 50.

1 Town  
10 Cities  
6 Counties  
8 Authorities

To receive the full data set or for more information about the Draper Aden Associates Connection Fee Survey, contact Bill Aden ([baden@daa.com](mailto:baden@daa.com)) or Cathy Hanks ([chanks@daa.com](mailto:chanks@daa.com)) at 540/552-0444.

## Permit fees.....continued from front.

amounts allocated to these programs in the 2002 Appropriation Act; however, no individual permit fee can increase more than 300 percent. The bill also triples the statutory caps on water permit fees."

There is a July 1, 2004, sunset on the new fee structure. At that time the fees will revert to the previous amount unless additional legislation is introduced to restructure or reintroduce fee amounts.

The new permit fee caps are as follows:

### VPDES

Major .....	\$24,000
Minor .....	\$10,500
General .....	\$1,200

### Virginia Pollution Abatement

Industrial/Wastewater .....	\$15,000
Industrial/Sludge .....	\$7,500
Municipal/Wastewater .....	\$15,000
Municipal/Sludge .....	\$7,500
Other .....	\$750

### 401 Certification/Virginia Water Protection

Individual .....	\$9,000
General .....	\$1,200

**Ground Water Withdrawal.....\$6,000**

**Surface Water Withdrawal.....\$12,000**

For more information concerning water permits contact Bill Kreye ([bkreye@daa.com](mailto:bkreye@daa.com)) at 804/264-2228 or Matt Stolte ([mstolte@daa.com](mailto:mstolte@daa.com)) at 540/552-0444.

**Draper Aden Associates is a full-service engineering, surveying and environmental consulting firm. Services include: civil/utilities engineering; environmental services, geological/hydrogeological services; geotechnical/construction/laboratory; site planning & engineering; solid waste management; surveying; subsurface utility engineering, information management services, GIS and design/build/operate solutions.**



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